

inseparable. Further, the Applicants note that the claims of Group III are directly dependent from the claims of Group II. Accordingly, it is improper to separate these claims.

Applicants traverse the Restriction Requirement on the additional grounds that the Office has not shown that a burden exists in searching all the claims of the present application.

Moreover, MPEP §803 states as follows:

If the search and examination of an entire application can be made without serious burden, the Examine must examine it on its merits, even though it includes claims to distinct or independent inventions.

Applicants submit that a search of all claims would not constitute a serious burden on the Office.

Additionally, MPEP §821.04 states:

...if applicant elects claims directed to the product, and a product claim is subsequently found allowable, withdrawn process claims which depend from or otherwise include all the limitations of the allowable product claim will be rejoined.

Applicants respectfully submit that should the elected group be found allowable, the corresponding non-elected process claims should be rejoined.

For the reasons set forth above, Applicants contend that the Restriction Requirement is improper and should be withdrawn.

Applicants respectfully submit that the above-identified application is now in condition for examination on the merits, and early notice of such action is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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